

## THE USE OF SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION TECHNIQUE TO INCREASE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

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### Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan apakah ada peningkatan yang signifikan pada pemahaman membaca siswa setelah diajarkan dengan menggunakan teknik *small group discussion*. Penelitian ini dilakukan dikelas IXB yang berisi 26 siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan *one-group pretest posttest design*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pemahaman siswa membaca teks *anecdote* dengan menggunakan teknik *small group discussion* meningkat. Nilai rata-rata siswa mencapai 13.61, di mana nilai rata-rata siswa pada pretest adalah 51.80 menjadi 65.42 pada posttest. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa terdapat peningkatan yang signifikan pada pemahaman membaca siswa setelah mereka diajarkan dengan menggunakan teknik *small group discussion*.

### Abstract

The aim of the research was to find out whether there is any significant increase of students' reading comprehension achievement after being taught by using small group discussion technique. The sample of the research is IXB that consisted of 26 students. The research uses one-group pretest posttest design. The result shows that the students' reading comprehension of anecdote text by using small group discussion technique increased. The gain of the students' mean score of pretest and posttest was 13.61 where the students' mean score was 51.80 in the pretest and 65.42 in the posttest. It can be concluded that there is a significant increase of students' reading comprehension achievement after they were taught by using small group discussion technique.

**Key words:** anecdote text, reading comprehension, small group discussion

## **INTRODUCTION**

English is one of the languages that must be learned by all of students from elementary school to university level. There are four skills of language, i. e, listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Reading is very important because every activity in the classroom always has relationship with reading. According to Hill (1997:58), reading is a process to understand a written text which means extracting the acquired information from it as efficiently as possible.

Reading always comes along with comprehension. According to Texas Reading Initiative (2002), the purpose of reading is comprehension or to get meaning from written text. Similar to this, Grabe and Stoller (2002: 17) define reading comprehension as the ability of understanding and interpreting information in a text correctly. Comprehension in reading becomes important because it makes the readers have understood what they read. In other words, their reading is not useless. Reading comprehension is defined as the level of understanding of a text.

In fact the junior high school students cannot acquire the aspect of language well. Most of them were still confused to comprehend an English text. It means that their reading comprehension is still low. For this reason the researcher applied “small group discussion technique for teaching reading.

A small group is a small member of human, work together through interaction whose interdependent relationship allows them to achieve a mutual goal (Kenz and Greg, 2000:4). The students can work together in solving their problems or they can answer the question from the teacher. Sagala (2008: 20) says that group discussion is more effective if the group consisted of 3-4 students; enable students

to give their opinions or ideas to other students easily. In a group, the students are free to talk and to discuss the solution to answer the questions because they do not accomplish their tasks individually. That is why the researcher chooses this technique to increase students' reading comprehension. Anecdote text helped the researcher in applied small group discussion technique.

According to Bima and Cicik (2005:14) an anecdote text is a kind of text which deals with something unexpected. It usually contains some unusual or amusing incident. Its purpose is to entertaining the readers. Sometimes humors, and anecdotes are not jokes because their primary purpose is not simply to evoke laughter, but to reveal a truth more general than the brief tale itself, or to delineate a character trait or the workings of an institution in such a light that it strikes in a flash of insight to their very essence.

The researcher is interested in using anecdote texts because the communicative purpose of anecdote text is retelling the unusual incident of someone. So the text makes the students curious to read and comprehend the text. By using small group discussion technique, the students are able to discuss with their group. Each group worked together to solve problem and answer the questions from the passage, especially anecdote texts.

Based on the explanation above, the article deal is aimed to answer the research question "Is there any significant increase of students' reading comprehension achievement after they being taught by using small group discussion technique?"

## **Method**

This research was quantitative research by using one group pre-test and post-test design. The purpose of quantitative research is to support the previous theory. Research design is arranged to collect the data that will be used in the test (Setiyadi, 2006:5). In this research, pretest (T1) was given before the researcher teaches anecdotes text by using small group discussion technique, and post test (T2) was given after being taught anecdote text by using small group discussion technique. The reseach is used repeated measure t-test to analyze the data. The data of the reseach were taken from pretest, three treatments, and posttest to the experiment class. The treatments gave in three times by using small group discussion technique to increase students' reading comprehension.

And the research design as follow:

**T1      X      T2**

Note;

T1 : Pre-Test

X : Treatment by using small group discussion (Three times)

T2 : Post-Test

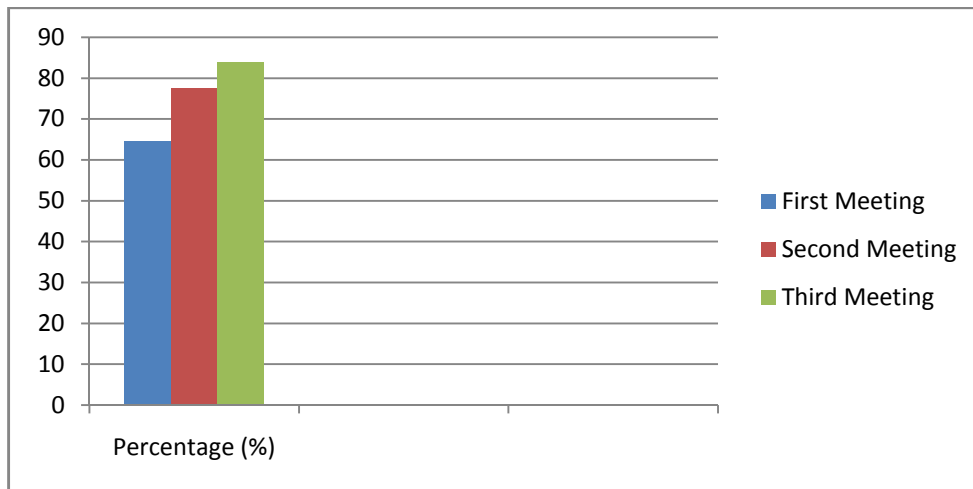
(Setiyadi, 2006:131)

## **Result and Discussion**

To know the student's reading comprehension achievement before the treatments. The test was conducted in experimental class (1XB) In 90 minutes. There were 40 items with four alternative answers for each (A, B, C, and D). One was the correct answer and the rest were the distracters. The total scores of the pretest in the experimental class were 1347. The mean of pretest was 51.80, the median was 52.00, the mode was 60.00, the highest score of pre test was 32.00 and the lowest score was 70.00. The treatments gave to the class in three meeting.

The observation was conducted in class IXB to observe the students' activities in teaching learning process during the treatment of teaching reading comprehension using small group discussion technique. There were ten activities that have been done by the students, they were; (1) paying attention to the teacher's explanation, (2) response to the teacher's questions, (3) following the teacher instructions, (4) do the exercise that given by the teacher, (5) giving opinion in group discussion, (6) respond the opinion in group discussion, (7) making summary, (8) give information to others, (9) asking the information, and (10) response the information or questions. The information of the students' activities were obtained from the observer. She is the English teachers of SMPN 1 Karya Penggawa Krui. The increase of student's activities in teaching and learning process can be seen in the graph bellow:

**Graph: The Increase of Students' Activities in Teaching Learning Process**



The graph above indicates that the students' activity increase from the first meeting until the last meeting. At the first meeting there were 7 students who cannot fulfill the criteria of good level students, it means that more than 60% of 26 students fulfill the criteria. At the second meeting, there were 5 students who cannot achieve the criteria of good level students. They still got the low score of the activities in the teaching and learning process through small group discussion technique. It means that more than 70% of 26 students succeed to get the good criteria. At the last meeting, there were 3 students who can get the criteria of good level students yet. It means that more than 80% of 26 students got the good level students in the activities. From the result, it can be concluded that the students' activity of the first meeting until the end increase.

After giving three treatments to the experimental class (1XB), the researcher administered the posttest. The posttest was administered to measure the students' reading comprehension achievement whether increase or not. There were 40 items of objective reading comprehension test with four alternative answer for

each ( A,B, C, D). The total score of posttest was 1701. The highest score of posttest was 80, the lowest score was 50, the means was 65.42, the median was 65.00, and the mode was 62.00.

In this research, there were five aspects which were measured in this research, such as identifying topic sentence, interpreting problem, multiple meaning, inference, and characters view (Suparman: 2012). After analyzing the result of pretest and posttest per aspects, it can be seen that the total students' correct answer identify topic sentence increase from 82 to 105, in which the increase was 23. In other words, 67.30% of the students answered the question of identifying the topic sentence aspect correctly, in which the increase percentage was 14.74%.

The second one is the total students' correct answer of interpreting problem increase from 119 to 138, in which the increase was 19. In other word, 66.34% of students answered the question of interpreting problem aspect correctly in the post-test, in which the increase percentage was 15.14%.

The third, the total students' correct answer of multiple meaning was increase from 99 to 146, in which the increase was 47. In other word, 70.19% of students answered the question of multiple meaning aspect correctly, in which the increase percentage was 22.59%.

And the fourth is the total students' correct answer of inference increase from 160 to 180, in which the increase was 20. In other word, 62.93 % of students answered the question of feature of the text element correctly in the post-test, in which the increase percentage was 7%. The last, the total students' correct answer of the

characters view of the text was increase from 91 to 114, in which the increase was 23. In other words, 62.63% of students answered the question of characters view aspect of reading correctly in the post-test, in which the increase percentage was 13.19%.

**Table of the result of five aspects**

No.	Aspect of Reading Comprehension	Pre-test (%)	Post-test (%)	The Improvement (%)
1.	Topic Sentence	82 (52.56%)	105 (67.30%)	23 (14.74%)
2.	Interprating problem	119 (57.20%)	138 (66.34%)	19 (15.14%)
3.	Multiple meaning-word clues	99 (47.60%)	146 (70.19%)	47 (22.59%)
4.	Inference	160 (55.93%)	180 (57.70%)	20 (7%)
5.	Characters view	91 (49.44%)	114 (62.63%)	23 (13.19%)

Based on the result, it can be seen that determining the multiple meaning aspect was highest increase of students' achievement (22.59%) and making inference aspect is the lowest increase of students' achievement (7%). It happened because the students are easier to ditermine the multiple meaning than making inference. They have difficulties in making inference because they should acquire and comprehends all content of the passage. While the multiple meaning, the students just determines the synonym or antonym of the words in the assignment. Therefore, small group discussion technique mostly increases the students' reading comprehension in determining the aspect of reading which used in this research.



Based on the computation also shows that that t-value was 11.191 and the two tail significance show that  $p=0.000$ . It means that  $p<0.05$ . Referring to the criteria, that is,  $H_1$  is accepted if  $t_0 > t_{tab}$  and  $p<0.05$ , meaning that  $H_1$  was accepted and  $H_0$  was rejected. It can be concluded that there is a significant increase of students' reading comprehension achievement after they are taught by using small group discussion technique. It is means that the treatments by using small group discussion technique use anecdote text in the experimental class had good effect on the students' achievement in reading comprehension.

This present research can be used to support the theory stating point that small group of students are highly useful for comprehending content area of a text (Briyant, et. Al., 1999 in Standish, 2005). This research also support the previous research, the research shows that the use of small-group discussions (together with specific instruction in argumentation skills) improved students' ability to construct the reading ability (Bennet, et. Al, 2004). Arif M (2011) also concludes that there is a significant difference between the students' achievement in reading comprehension before and after they were taught through small group discussion. This technique is very effective because the students work together, they are accessible the benefit of understanding a topic on a level more appropriate to their aptitude of understanding.

## **Conclusions and Suggestions**

Based on the result of the data analysis and discussions, it can be concluded that there is significant increase of students' reading comprehension achievement after the treatments using small group discussion technique. It can be seen in the students' pretest and posttest score in experimental class. The result of this research indicated that the increase of students' reading comprehension scores in the experimental class after treatments was significant, it can be seen that the result of the computation shows that t-value was 11.191 and the two tail significance show that  $p < 0.05$  ( $p = 0.000$ ). Referring to the criteria, that is,  $H_1$  is accepted if  $t_0 > t_{tab}$  and  $p < 0.05$ , meaning that  $H_1$  was accepted and  $H_0$  was rejected. Based on the pre test result, the data show that 70 was the highest score, 32 was the lowest score, and the mean score was 50.81. In the result of posttest, the data show that the highest score was 80, the lowest score was 50, and the mean was 65.42. The difference can be seen by comparing the mean scores between the pre test and post test, from 50.81 up to 65.42 with the gained score is 13.61.

From the result of the result, the researcher would like to give some suggestions as follows:

### **1. For the Teachers**

- a. They should apply small group discussion technique because it is found that the technique is good technique for technique reading.

- b. The teacher should give more chances to the students to be more active, and let the students to several practices. The teacher should give the students more chance to help them when they face difficulties.

## **2. For the Students**

- a. The students should learn more active in solving problems in reading comprehension in order to develop their abilities in reading English.
- b. They should practice the language they have learned with their friends or teachers.

## **3. For the School**

- a. The school should provide more English books to be read by the students, so that they can increase their knowledge.
- b. The school should provide sufficient facility for students to practice their English competency.

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